

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the pending conference report on Wednesday immediately following morning business. I further ask consent that there be 25 minutes of debate controlled by the chairman and 75 minutes controlled by the ranking member. I further ask consent that following the use or yielding back of time, the conference report be set aside, and further that at 10 o'clock a.m. on Thursday, June 15, the Senate proceed to a vote on the adoption of the conference report to accompany H.R. 4939, the emergency supplemental appropriations bill, with no further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR ROBERT BYRD

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on Monday, Senator ROBERT BYRD of West Virginia reached an extraordinary milestone: 17,327 days in the United States Senate, almost 48 years. He has cast over 17,000 rollcall votes. His congressional career has spanned the tenure of 10 Presidents, beginning with President Dwight David Eisenhower. In West Virginia, he has run 14 times and never lost.

He has served for over 60 years in both the House and the Senate and other public service. This year he is running for his unprecedented ninth term as a United States Senator from West Virginia. Suffice it to say, he is the longest serving Senator in the history of West Virginia, as he is in the history of the United States. He is the only person in West Virginia to carry every county in the State, all 55. He has run unopposed for the Senate because of the regard, the respect, and, indeed, the affection of the people of West Virginia.

He is 88 years old. He is not slowing down, he has never slowed down, and he will keep it up. As a Member of the Senate, he has been a leader—Democratic whip, majority and minority leader, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and President pro tempore of the Senate on two occasions.

In everything he has done, he has been a champion of the Constitution and the people of West Virginia. He secured billions of dollars in funding for his home State, and he has been a leader on mine safety and other issues that are so closely tied to his constituents.

In May 2001, Senator BYRD was given the award that everyone recognizes is

his due. Gov. Bob Wise and both houses of the West Virginia General Assembly named him “West Virginian of the 20th Century,” and he is striving now for the 21st century.

He is an individual who is a self-made man, starting off in war industries in a shipyard, and earning his law degree cum laude from American University while a Member of the United States Congress. He is also someone who recognizes the need for education of others. He created the Robert C. Byrd National Honors Scholarship. This scholarship provides opportunities for young Americans to pursue education as he has pursued his education.

He is a historian—a historian of this Senate and the Roman Senate. In fact, his 3,000-page “History of the United States Senate” is the premier history of this August body. He is a defender, a supporter, and, in some cases, the living embodiment of the United States Constitution. He carries it with him everywhere and every time. He is someone who not only talks about the Constitution, but on the floor of this Senate and in this country defends it each day.

He is an individual of great prominence. He is an individual of great humanity.

There is only one fact, I think, that is dimming this very special occasion for the Senator, and that is, it is not being shared by his beloved wife Erma Ora Byrd. But she is looking on this day with the same satisfaction, the same sense of accomplishment.

It is only fitting to close with a quote from Senator BYRD because I can in no way match his oratorical skills. In September 1998, he addressed the history of the Senate and he said:

Clio being my favorite muse, let me begin this evening with a look backward over the well-traveled roads of history. History always turns our faces backward, and this is as it should be, so that we might be better informed and prepare to exercise wisdom in dealing with future events.

His grasp of the past has given him a wise and insightful view of the future. He has always encouraged us to learn our history and then practice our history to shape the future of this country in this Hall of the Senate.

He has stood tall on so many occasions, but most notably I think was in October 2002. With an iron will and articulate voice, he questioned the policy of this Government as we entered this fight in Iraq.

History, I think, will record his wisdom, his decency, and his contribution to the country. Although I am a day late, I hope I am not a dollar short.

Congratulations to Senator BYRD on his model accomplishment.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I join our colleagues in the accolades and commendation for our colleague, the senior Senator from West Virginia. I believe there is no other Senator who commands the respect and the admiration and the love of fellow Senators as does Senator BYRD.

My first encounter with Senator BYRD, I will never forget. Right over there at that desk, 5½ years ago, I rose to make my maiden speech in the Senate. In the course of that speech to a fairly empty Chamber of the Senate, I happened to mention that it was my maiden speech. In a few moments, suddenly the doors of the Senate flung open and in strode Senator BYRD. He sat down at his desk and listened very politely and patiently as I continued my first oration in this tremendous, most deliberative body. As I finished, Senator BYRD stood and said, “Would the Senator from Florida yield?” I said, of course, “I yield to the distinguished Senator from West Virginia.” He proceeded to give a history of the Senate about maiden speeches. He told how, in the old days, when word would get out that a new Senator was going to give his first speech, all of the other Senators would gather around because they wanted to hear what the new Senator was saying. Of course, you can imagine what an impression this made on this new Senator 5½ years ago by not only the conscience of the Senate but the historian of the Senate, the keeper of the rules of the Senate, the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. And, of course, he passed a milestone yesterday. All of us are proud for him, and we are exceptionally proud for this institution, that it would have a Senator such as the distinguished senior Senator from West Virginia.

I want the Senate to know that this Senator is very privileged that he has had the opportunity not only to call him a friend and colleague but that this Senator has had the opportunity to sit at his knee and try to soak up the wisdom of the years, the exceptional historical knowledge of this institution and the extraordinary knowledge of history of planet Earth that the Senator brings to this Chamber.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise to talk about a significant event that took place yesterday in the U.S. Senate, and that is the fact that we have now a new longest serving U.S. Senator in the history of our country. Senator BYRD nears the end of his eighth term here in the Senate but holding more than just another significant record. His contribution to our country has been almost beyond compare. He already holds Senate records for the most leadership positions held and for the most rollcall votes cast, over 17,600 and still counting.

Starting in 1946, Senator BYRD has run in 14 elections for the West Virginia House of Delegates, the State Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. He inspires the envy of all of us because he has won all of these races, and I have no doubt that voters in West Virginia will reelect him to a ninth Senate term this fall. That is going to enable him in December of 2009 to pass the record that Carl Hayden has as the longest serving Member of Congress in United States history. But BOB BYRD is not here

merely to set and break records. He is here to serve the people of West Virginia and all Americans, and he has done so admirably.

Senator BYRD is a testament to the values of hard work and perseverance. Almost from the start, he has had a hard life, but he has triumphed. His mother died from the 1918 flu pandemic, when Senator BYRD was just an infant. His aunt and uncle raised him in the hardscrabble coalfields of West Virginia during the Great Depression. He was the valedictorian of his high school class, but he couldn't afford to go to college. After high school, Senator BYRD went to work. He pumped gas, sold produce, became a meat cutter and welder. During World War II, he helped to build Liberty and Victory ships in the Baltimore and Tampa shipyards.

Following the war, he began his career as an elected official, winning a seat in the House of Delegates in West Virginia. In 1952, he was elected to the first of three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1958, he was elected to the U.S. Senate. In his races since then, he has carried all 55 of West Virginia's counties. In the year 2000, he won all but seven of West Virginia's 1,970 precincts. What a record. It is hard to find one that compares in any way to the allegiance that he has had from the constituents in West Virginia who not only send him back here but love him as their representative at the same time.

It just wasn't winning elections. Senator BYRD could have rested on his laurels, but that is not his style. His life and career have been a relentless pursuit of self-improvement. In 1963, after 10 years of taking classes at night, Senator BYRD earned his law degree cum laude from American University. He didn't have to do that because he wasn't going to become a lawyer, but he thought it would make him a better person and a better Senator.

Senator BYRD is a great example to all of us, but he is especially interesting for America's young people for three reasons. First, he is truly a self-made man. Nothing has been handed to him. He has earned it all. He knows what it is like to be poor, and he knows what it is like to do hard manual labor. That is why he has always been the working man's champion.

Second, he is always striving to learn more and do more. No other Senator can match his extensive knowledge on so many subjects or can recite so many passages from the Bible or from Roman history or from Shakespeare and other playwrights and poets. Senator BYRD isn't content merely to memorize what others have written. He literally wrote the book on the history of the U.S. Senate. No one can match his knowledge of Senate rules, precedents, and parliamentary procedure.

Finally, Senator BYRD is a shining example to all of us because of his steadfast commitment to principle, especially with regard to the role of a

U.S. Senator. He has never wavered in his defense of our institution. All Americans are deeply indebted to him for that dedication and loyalty. At a time when the current administration is intent on usurping powers that the Founding Fathers reserved for Congress, we need Senator BYRD more than ever, his reminders to all of us about what is appropriate in terms of obeying the rules and the procedures we have adopted, but more importantly, the honor that this institution has developed over more than 200 years.

Senator BYRD has demonstrated that fearlessly standing on principle, even when it is unpopular, is the key to a successful political career and in life generally. His concern for his State and his constituents, and his ability to deliver for them, are legendary. But above all, Senator BYRD has stood up for the Constitution. He is what we refer to as a Senator's Senator. We are truly fortunate to have him here, and we are truly privileged to serve with him. He is also a wonderful colleague. He never forgets a birthday or other important occasion, never fails to remind us of the beauty of the seasons.

Yesterday his service here in the Senate reached 17,327 days, a record for which he can be appropriately proud. I know that day was bittersweet because it also marked the birthday of his beloved wife, Erma Ora James, his high school sweetheart, and a coal miner's daughter. We were all so sad when Erma passed away this past March, just 2 months shy of their 69th wedding anniversary. Their love for each other, their respect for each other, was an inspiration to every one of us.

Senator BYRD's record-setting day yesterday was tinged with some sorrow and reflection, but I hope he can take comfort in knowing that so many people here in the Senate and all across America hold him in such high regard.

I would like to borrow a page from Senator BYRD by quoting Shakespeare, who in "Twelfth Night" wrote:

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.

Senator BYRD has achieved greatness in the U.S. Senate. He achieved it through his tireless service to the people of West Virginia and his fearless defense of the Constitution of the United States of America. The Senate and the Nation are far better for his efforts. We wish him well, a continued ability to serve, and look forward to hearing from him when he talks about subjects that are so familiar to him and yet are so far removed from the typical daily thought that we run into.

Senator BYRD, when I first came here, invited me into his office. He delivered a treatise on the former rulers of Great Britain, the Kings of England. From memory, he recalled the length of their term, how they died, who succeeded each and every one of them. I sat there feeling like I was back in the university or even earlier than that, because he had this incredible and has

this incredible memory of so many things, and he can relate them wonderfully.

I come out of the computer business. Until I got here and got to know BOB BYRD, I didn't realize that there is someone who has the knowledge, the database, the information that is very difficult to find in other than very large capacity computers.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I do want to talk for a minute about Senator BYRD and recognize he has set a record in the Senate, as many of my colleagues have noted on the floor.

He marked his 17,327th day in office yesterday and became the longest serving Senator in history. That is truly a remarkable accomplishment, and I personally have many fond memories of working with Senator BYRD and look forward to many more.

I remember well when I came here as a freshman Senator 13½ years ago. Senator BYRD at the time brought in all of us freshmen Senators to sit across from him in his very important office and looked down at us and told us that we would be presiding, as is the Presiding Officer today, and told us about our responsibilities and made it very clear he would be watching from his office, and if we were reading any other material or talking to anyone it would be noted.

I certainly did remember that during the many hours I spent in the Presiding Officer's chair because I knew he was watching. But I think it was a simple reminder to all of us as to the importance of the office we hold here and the respect we have to have for our colleagues.

I remember as well that he invited me to lunch several months later with the Senator from Oregon, Mr. Hatfield, a Republican, to sit down and talk with me about the responsibilities I had as a Senator. And I was so impressed sitting in the room with Senator BYRD and Senator Hatfield, never in my life expecting to have that kind of opportunity. And at that meeting they impressed upon me the importance of working across the aisle and respect for the minority and how important everybody's voice is here. It was an important lesson and one I think we all should be reminded of more often.

But just that simple act of inviting me to lunch with two incredible leaders in the Senate is a memory I hold dear, and I thank my colleague for doing that.

But, frankly, I think what I most will remember Senator BYRD for—and is a good reminder to all of us, too—is several years ago when my husband came out here to Washington, DC—he lives in Washington State. I go home every weekend. But he came out here because it was our wedding anniversary, and instead of me having to fly home, he flew out here. He was coming up the steps of the Capitol, and I met him as Senator BYRD was walking out to his car.

Senator BYRD saw my husband, and he said: Welcome. Nice to have you

here at this end of the country. What brings you here?

And my husband said: Well, it is our wedding anniversary.

And Senator BYRD, who, as we well know, lost his beloved wife just a few short weeks ago, was about to celebrate I think it was his 67th wedding anniversary. He looked at my husband and said: Which anniversary is this?

And my husband said: It is our 32nd.

Senator BYRD paused and said: Well, it is a good start.

I think the message of that is important for all of us in our everyday lives, in our responsibilities as spouses, and as Senators, to remember it is a good start every day, and you can't rest on your laurels and think back: Well, we have done this for 32 years. The next 32 will be easy. Every day you have to come out and work hard at whatever role you are in at the time.

I certainly say to my good friend, Senator BYRD, how much I respect him and admire him. And today, as he marks his 17,328th day in office, I say to him: It is a good start.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Senator BYRD, a man I am honored to call colleague and friend.

Senator BYRD is a hero and a patriot—as noble and eloquent as the great Senators—from Cicero to Richard B. Russell—of whom he has taught us all so much. He is a living example of the great opportunity in America. He is a living tribute to the preeminence of our constitutional democracy.

Senator BYRD lives to serve the people of West Virginia who sent him here, just as he would die to protect the Constitution that guides his every step. It is his duty and joy to use his prodigious legislative skill for West Virginia, and it is West Virginians' great fortune to be represented by a man who knows and does his job so well.

Several years ago, Senator BYRD turned one of my worst days in the Senate into one of my best. It was the end of session, late in the evening, and I had lost a fierce battle over dairy policy. Most Senators were wandering out to make their planes, and Senator BYRD stood up. In ringing tones, he made a short speech about the battle I just lost. In part, he said: "He has stood up for the people of Wisconsin. That is what I like about him. He stands for principle. He stands for his people."

No kinder words have been spoken about me in this Chamber—no accolade of which I am more proud. Senator BYRD, you too stand for principle. You stand for your people. And that's what I like about you.

I am not an orator like Senator BYRD, and I certainly don't have the words to say what his friendship has meant to me and what his stewardship has meant to this country. Let me instead borrow the words of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a poet Senator BYRD quotes often here on the floor and often from memory. I'm sure he knows this one, too:

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time

Senator BYRD is a great man. His dedication to duty, his love of country, and his devotion to his family are examples to us all. He leaves footprints in the very soil of this Nation that have and will continue to shape—for the better—who we are. I am grateful for his friendship and honored to serve with him.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to add my voice to the chorus of praise for an extraordinary member of this institution—my dear friend from West Virginia, Senator ROBERT BYRD.

What a pleasure it has been to serve with Senator BYRD.

I am constantly inspired by his grace—his brilliance—and his unmatched work ethic.

Today we honor Senator BYRD for reaching the milestone of longest-serving Senator in history—8 terms—48 years—and 17,666 votes.

These are stunning numbers, but this legend is much more than the Cal Ripken, Jr., of the Senate.

Longevity is only part of the story. We know him best for his intellect, his devotion to the people of West Virginia, and his reverence for the institution of the Senate; for keeping a copy of the Constitution in his breast pocket—next to his heart—at all times, not for symbolism but for constant counsel, for having served beside 11 Presidents—both Democrat and Republican; for standing with them when their cause is just—yet never backing down from a fight with any President when he believes important principles are at stake, particularly when our role as a coequal branch of government is threatened.

And that is what I admire most about Senator BYRD: He always stands on principle and fights for what he believes, no matter what the odds.

What an inspiration this has been to me and to so many of us.

What an inspiration—his love of this country, his integrity, his absolute dedication to honest and principled government.

And what an inspiration—his 68-year partnership with his wife Erma—whom I know he misses dearly—and whom I know is looking down on him today with tremendous pride and love.

And it is for these reasons—far more than for his longevity—that we honor him today.

But anyone who knows Senator BYRD realizes that these words of praise are not sought because, despite his well-earned title of Senate Historian—Senator BYRD is not one to dwell on the past. He is a forward thinker.

For him, this special day is really just another day at the office.

Because as ROBERT BYRD knows best of all—there are crucial issues to debate. Problems to solve. And many more votes to be cast.

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my friend and colleague

ROBERT BYRD, who yesterday officially became the longest serving Member in the history of the Senate.

As of June 12, 2006, Senator BYRD had officially served West Virginia in the Senate for 17,327 days. That is an astounding 47½ years since he took office on January 3, 1959. It was a time when a postage stamp cost \$0.04, gasoline was \$0.25 per gallon, and you could buy a brand new Ford car for a little over \$2,100.

Senator BYRD has served through 10 Presidencies, statehood for Alaska and Hawaii, wartime and peacetime, surplus and deficit, the dawn of space travel and the advent of the Information Age. And, as I stand here today, I have to chuckle at the fact that when I was just beginning the first grade, Senator BYRD was already serving his second term in the Senate.

However, the indelible mark he has left on this institution has more to do with the quality of his service than the length of his service. Senator BYRD has a deep love for his beloved home state of West Virginia, for the institution of the U.S. Senate, and for our country. Always ready with a copy of the Constitution in his pocket, Senator BYRD understands just how sacred this document truly is, and he fights every day to protect it.

He literally wrote the book on the rules and traditions of the Senate, and he teaches by example, offering the kind of eloquent, principled debate that has historically filled this Chamber. His speeches are honest and heartfelt, with a Shakespearean rhythm, peppered with stories from his boyhood in the coalfields of Appalachia. He is never shy about scolding colleagues when they put politics before principles or when they violate the practices of this great institution.

And yet he also exemplifies the cordial tradition of the Senate, disagreeing without being disagreeable, and always willing to offer a handshake to a political opponent at the end of hard-fought debate. He is a man of integrity, who has demonstrated that an honest search for truth can lead to a principled change of heart and a desire to seek justice for all.

I know this remarkable accomplishment is a bittersweet one, since Senator BYRD is not able to share it with his beloved wife Erma, who passed away in March. Yesterday, the day on which Senator BYRD set this record, was also Erma's birthday. It is fitting that he marks this milestone on the same day he celebrates Erma's life, because he has often credited Erma's unconditional love and support with sustaining him through his years of service.

When asked last week about achieving this milestone, Senator BYRD replied that "records are fine, but what's important is what I do for the people of West Virginia." That humble devotion to the people he serves is what brought ROBERT BYRD to the Senate more than 47 years ago, and it is what continues to drive him each and every day.

After I was sworn in last January, one of the first Senators I met with was Senator BYRD. We sat down in his hideaway on the first floor of the Capitol. After we posed for a few photographs, I inquired after his wife, who I had heard had taken a turn for the worse, and asked about some of the figures in the many photos that lined the walls. Eventually I asked him what advice he would give me as a new member of the Senate.

"Learn the rules," Senator BYRD said. "Not just the rules but the precedents as well." He pointed to a series of thick binders behind him, each one affixed with a hand-written label. "Not many people bother to learn them these days. Everything is so rushed, so many demands on a Senator's time. But these rules unlock the power of the Senate. They're the keys to the kingdom."

We spoke about the Senate's past, the Presidents he had known, the bills he had managed. He told me too many Senators today became quickly fixated on reaching the White House, not understanding that in the constitutional design it was the Senate that was supreme, the heart and soul of the Republic.

"So few people read the Constitution today," Senator BYRD said, pulling out a pocket copy from his breast pocket. "I've always said this document and the Holy Bible, they've been all the guidance I need."

On many occasions over the past year and a half, I have remembered these wise words as I have performed my duties in the Senate.

I am proud to call ROBERT BYRD a colleague, a friend, and a mentor. I congratulate him on this remarkable achievement and wish him all the best for many more years of service to our country.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my friend and colleague, Senator ROBERT C. BYRD, who today, on his 17,327th day in office, becomes longest serving Member of the Senate.

As I thought about Senator BYRD's remarkable career, I wondered: What can I say that would properly honor his long labors in service to this Senate and this Nation?

I decided to look back in history, the history that Senator BYRD has quoted time and again, and seek the advice of other Senators known for their oratory. And while many great speakers have blessed the United States Senate over its history, including Senator BYRD, I found wisdom in the advice of the great Roman Senator and orator, Cato the Elder.

He said: "Rem tene; verba sequentur." (rem TEN-ay WHEREba seKENToor)—"Grasp the subject, the words will follow."

So I sat back and thought about Senator BYRD, both over his long career that I have read about, and the 18 years I have been privileged to work with him as a colleague.

A lot of thoughts came to mind.

Warm. Courteous. Kind.

Hardworking. Humble. Humorous.

Both well read and an accomplished author well worth reading.

But none of these were quite right. I still hadn't grasped the subject.

Then an image hit me, the image of Senator BYRD reaching into his coat pocket for that copy of the Constitution he always keeps by his heart.

That was it. I knew I had grasped my subject.

Time after time, Senator BYRD has taken this floor to remind us we have duties beyond our parties, beyond our passions, beyond our personal philosophies.

Our overwhelming duty is to our Nation's Constitution and the unique responsibilities it assigns each House of the legislative branch.

In particular, Senator BYRD constantly reminds us that our duty as Senators is to be the more deliberative of the two legislative bodies as the Framers envisioned this Chamber to be. Federalist No. 62 says the Senate should be a body that does not "yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions" or be "seduced into pernicious resolutions."

So I thought about the history of this Senate. And I would like to reflect on the very first Senator, William Maclay of Pennsylvania, because his spirit is alive today in Senator BYRD. Senator Maclay became known among his colleagues as a stickler for following the Constitution, which sometimes put him at odds with those same colleagues. He also kept a meticulous diary of the proceedings of that first Senate.

One of the earliest debates in the first Senate was over what to call George Washington. It is hard to imagine now, but there were many back then who thought that "President of the United States" was not a fitting title, that something grander was needed.

A Title Committee was appointed in the Senate to consider titles such as, Your Elective Highness, and His Highness, the President of the United States and Protector of the Rights of the Same.

And those were some of the more modest proposals. The Senate also thought about giving special, nobility-style titles to members of the executive branch.

Senator Maclay found this absurd and in violation of the Constitution. He waited for someone else to speak out. But when no one else did, the very first Senator of the very first Senate rose and said:

"Mr. President, the Constitution of the United States has designated our chief magistrate by the appellation of President of the United States of America. This is his title of office. We cannot alter, add to, or diminish it without infringing on the Constitution. As to grades of order or nobility, nothing of the kind can be established by Congress."

In his diary, Maclay was even more biting about attempts to establish lofty titles because he thought they violated both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution.

He wrote:

"Never will I consent to straining the Constitution, nor will I consent to the exercise of doubtful power. We come here the servants, not the lords, of our constituents."

Now does that sound like anybody we know?

Looking toward the future, Senator Maclay went on to write:

"The new government, instead of being a powerful machine whose authority would support any measure, needs help . . . and must be supported by the ablest names and most shining characters which we can select."

I believe everyone here agrees that Senator BYRD embodies the "shining character" and dedication to the Constitution that the first Senator of the first Senate thought would be crucial to the new Nation's success.

I also believe Senator BYRD has done so by following the advice of that ancient Roman Senator who he has quoted so often, Cato the Elder. Senator BYRD has truly grasped his subject—the Constitution—and the words have followed for nearly half a century.

I hope his words will continue to enlighten this Senate and this Nation for years to come.

Senator BYRD, thank you.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, the Book of Proverbs says: "The silver-haired head is a crown of glory."

Today, the crown of glory rests upon the silver-haired head of our dear friend and colleague, ROBERT C. BYRD. For yesterday, he became the longest-serving Senator in the history of the Senate.

Senator BYRD has served in the Senate since January 3, 1959. That is longer than there have been 50 States in the Union. That was before Charles de Gaulle was President of France. That was before NASA had astronauts.

Senator BYRD has served as Senator during the terms of 10 Presidents, 9 majority leaders, and 8 Speakers of the House of Representatives.

For 12 years, Senator BYRD served as the leader of Senate Democrats. He served as majority leader, minority leader, and then majority leader again.

Senator BYRD has served as the Senate's historian, elder statesman, and conscience.

Senator BYRD has zealously defended the power of the purse. Senator BYRD has zealously defended the Senate. And Senator BYRD has zealously defended the Constitution of the United States.

But notwithstanding his having held the high rank of Senator for longer than any human being, Senator BYRD has never forgotten whence he came.

Senator ROBERT C. BYRD grew up in the bituminous coalfields of West Virginia, graduated from high school class in the depths of the Great Depression, and worked pumping gas, selling

produce, cutting meat, and welding ships. Even though Senator BYRD reached the zenith of power, Senator BYRD has always remained a man of the people.

Senator ROBERT C. BYRD is an assiduous pursuer of knowledge, a tenacious friend, and a man of deep, abiding faith.

Now Senator BYRD surpasses in length of service the likes of Strom Thurmond, Carl Hayden, John Stennis, Russell Long, and Richard Russell. And now Senator BYRD stands in quality of service with the likes of Daniel Webster, John Calhoun, Henry Clay, Robert La Follette, and Robert Wagner.

I thank almighty God that for more than 47 years, Americans have been able to call him "Senator." I thank God that for more than 27 of those years, I have been blessed to serve here with him. And I thank God that for more than 27 years, I have been blessed to call him "friend."

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CAPTAIN DOUGLAS A. DICENZO

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to U.S. Army CPT Douglas A. DiCenzo, of Plymouth, NH, a brave American who has made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

Douglas, or Doug to his family and friends, graduated from Plymouth Regional High School in 1995. While there, he gave us a glimpse of the characteristics that would later make him a remarkable soldier. He was a scholar-athlete in the truest sense. He exemplified leadership as class president, captain of both the football and wrestling teams, and an all-state offensive guard for the State champion Bobcat football team.

Daniel Webster said, "God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it." In this spirit, after high school, Doug earned an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY. Upon graduating with his fellow cadets as a second lieutenant with the Class of 1999, he earned an assignment as an Army infantry officer. Subsequently Doug completed the arduous infantry officer, Army Airborne, and Ranger courses. Next came a tour of duty to Fort Wainwright, AK, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, beginning as a platoon leader with B Company, Mortar Platoon Leader for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, executive officer for C Company and then battalion maintenance officer. Then, in July 2004, Doug was assigned to Headquarters, V Corp in Germany and a year later was assigned to command the 150 soldiers of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, based in Baumholder, Germany.

In November 2005, he deployed with his unit to Kuwait, and then Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Tragically, on May 25, 2006, this brave soldier, along with a comrade from his

unit, was killed during combat operations in Baghdad, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Captain DiCenzo's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, Combat Infantry Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Army Presidential Unit Citation, and Army Valorous Unit Award.

Patriots from the State of New Hampshire have served our nation with honor and distinction from Bunker Hill to Baghdad—and U.S. Army CPT Douglas A. DiCenzo served in that fine tradition. Captain DiCenzo was a well-respected and natural leader who exemplified the principles of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point—duty, honor, country. This optimistic, passionate, and patriotic American demonstrated the virtues extolled in the Cadet Prayer, "Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life. Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half truth when the whole can be won. Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy." CPT Douglas DiCenzo was dedicated to serving his country in these chaotic and violent times because he thought it was his duty to do this.

My heartfelt sympathy, condolences, and prayers go out to Doug's wife Nicole and their 18-month-old son Dakin, as well as to Doug's parents, Larry and Cathy, his brother Daniel, and his family and friends who have suffered this grievous loss. The death of Doug, only 30 years old, on a battlefield far from New Hampshire is also a great loss for our State, our Nation, and the world. Although he will be sorely missed by all, his family and friends may sense some comfort in knowing that because of his devotion, leadership, sense of duty, and selfless dedication, the safety and liberty of each and every American is more secure. May God bless CPT Douglas A. DiCenzo.

PRIVATE BENJAMIN J. SLAVEN

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I wish to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army PVT Benjamin J. Slaven from Nebraska. Private Slaven died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle while on patrol in Ad Diwaniyah, Iraq on June 9. He was 22 years old.

Private Slaven grew up in Plymouth, NE and received his high school equivalency diploma from Southeast Community College in 2005. He was deployed to Iraq in March after serving in the U.S. Army Reserves. Before being deployed, Private Slaven worked with develop-

mentally disabled young adults at the Beatrice State Development Center in Beatrice, NE. He was a member of Detachment 1, 308th Transportation Company based in Lincoln, NE. Private Slaven will be remembered as a loyal soldier who had a strong sense of duty, honor, and love of country. Thousands of brave Americans like Private Slaven are currently serving in Iraq.

Private Slaven is survived by his mother, Judy Huenink of Plymouth, NE; father, Bruce Slaven of Beatrice, NE; and sister, Misti Slaven. Judy and Bruce both served in the Air Force, and Misti is training to be a medical lab technician in the Army Reserve at Fort Bliss, TX. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this difficult time. America is proud of Private Slaven's heroic service and mourns his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring PVT Benjamin J. Slaven.

LANCE CORPORAL BRENT ZOUCHA

Mr. President, I also wish to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Marine Corps LCpl Brent Zoucha from Nebraska. Lance Corporal Zoucha died of wounds received while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq on June 9. He was 19 years old.

Lance Corporal Zoucha was a lifelong resident of Clarks, NE and graduated from High Plains Community High School in 2005. In high school, he was a standout athlete, earning second place in the high jump at the 2005 State track meet. He was also named honorable mention to the Omaha World-Herald's all-Nebraska basketball team. Lance Corporal Zoucha enlisted in the Marine Corps while still in high school and served with his brother, CPL Dyrek Zoucha, in the same unit in Iraq. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA. Lance Corporal Zoucha will be remembered as a loyal soldier who had a strong sense of duty, honor, and love of country. Thousands of brave Americans like Lance Corporal Zoucha are currently serving in Iraq.

Lance Corporal Zoucha is survived by his mother, Rita; brothers, Dyrek and Dominic; and sister, Sherri, of Duncan, NE. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this difficult time. America is proud of Lance Corporal Zoucha's heroic service and mourns his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring LCpl Brent Zoucha.

PRIVATE TIM MADISON

Mr. President, I further express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army PVT Tim Madison from Nebraska. Private Madison was killed in a training exercise at Fort Carson, CO, on June 8. He was 28 years old.

Private Madison grew up in Bellevue, NE, and graduated from Bellevue East High School in 1997. Private Madison was a loving father of three children and loved being outdoors. He was a member of the Army's 2nd Brigade